

Dip in!

How to get the **best** results
from emollient therapy





To get the full benefit from emollients, you have to use them correctly. The do's and don'ts in this leaflet will help you in this.


 **DO use the right emollient for the job**

- **Ointments** will protect and moisturise dry skin most effectively, but you may find them greasy. They can, however, be very useful overnight or on very dry or cracked skin.
- **Creams** which are absorbed into the skin are ideal for less severely affected areas or when appearance is important, such as for use on the face.
- **Bath emollients** when used as soap substitutes let you completely avoid the irritating effects of soaps and detergents in the bath or shower. Some emollient creams can also be used as soap substitutes.

 **DO use plenty**

Emollients should be applied as liberally and often as possible. The British Association of Dermatologists recommend that ideally you should apply them every 4 hours – at the very least 3-4 times a day.


They also recommend that, depending on age and the severity of the condition, you should use 250-600g per week. You may find it useful to use a pump dispenser.


 **DO use them all day, every day**

Complete emollient therapy will give you the best results. Using combinations of cream, ointment, and bath emollient to keep skin moisturised throughout the day will reduce the need for steroids. According to the British Association of Dermatologists, the amount of emollient used should be about 10 times as much as any steroid for most people.

 **DO continue to use emollients after symptoms appear to have gone to prevent flare-ups**

Even after a flare-up, use of an emollient can help prevent further occurrence and will help maintain healthy moisturised skin.

 **DO always read the manufacturers' patient information leaflet**

 **DON'T use cosmetic moisturising creams or hand creams**

These contain many ingredients such as fragrances or preservatives which can be very irritating to sensitive or damaged skin, and may make dermatitis worse.

 **DON'T use soap, bubble bath or cosmetic shampoos**

All of these will tend to dry and irritate affected skin even more because they contain powerful detergents and potentially irritant perfumes. Using bath emollient in the bath and shower, or emollient cream as a soap substitute is just as effective and will not dry out your skin. If your scalp is affected special non-irritant shampoos are available. It may be helpful to wash your hair over the sink or bath to avoid shampoo getting onto affected skin.



Which emollient?

Although all emollients are designed to moisturise the skin, they will not all suit everybody.

Some contain substances that are recognised as liable to cause allergies, particularly in those with sensitive skin. These include common ingredients like lanolin, and the widely used preservatives known as parabens.

When choosing emollients for children it is particularly important to find ones that they like and will use. It is vital that they should not sting, even on the sorest skin.

Diprobase and Diprobath

Diprobase and Diprobath do not contain perfume, lanolin or parabens. As a result they are ideal for using liberally, throughout the day, from morning shower to bedtime.

Diprobase and Diprobath are designed to work together to give you complete emollient therapy.

Diprobath is available as ointment or cream.

- Diprobath ointment for maximum effect on areas of severely dry and cracked skin, or on the arms, legs or body and for use at night when appearance and getting greasy marks on clothes is less of a problem.
- Diprobath cream for less severely affected areas, on visible areas such as the face or as a soap substitute and for use when appearance is important.

Diprobath is a bath emollient and soap substitute. It may also be used in the shower.

What are eczema and dermatitis?

Eczema and dermatitis are skin conditions which are characterised by dryness and inflammation, with either weepiness or scabiness. Both usually produce severe itching and the resulting scratching can lead to skin thickening, cracking, weeping and infection.

Eczema normally refers to a chronic condition, which periodically flares up. It normally clears up during childhood, but may continue on into adolescence and adult life.

Dermatitis usually refers to reactions to specific known causes. Dermatitis may be due to allergy or to chemical irritants such as detergents.

What do emollients do?

When you or your child has eczema or dermatitis, whether it is due to allergy or chemical irritation, the skin loses moisture, becoming dry, sore and itchy.

Emollients help to overcome this by keeping the skin moisturised, soft and supple. This, in its turn, soothes the irritation, relieves soreness, reduces itching and may often be the only treatment that is needed.

Emollients can also maintain the improvement between courses of steroid, reduce the amount of steroid needed and may stop the dermatitis coming back.

Diprobath[®]

Light liquid paraffin,
isopropyl myristate

Diprobase[®]

Emollient

Always read the label.

Further information available from:
MSD, Welwyn Garden City, Herts. AL7 1TW

ECZEMAANDDERMATITIS.CO.UK

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